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LATIN AMERICA REPORT

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FORMER ECONOMY MINISTER ASSESSES CURRENT MEASURES

Buenos Aires SOMOS in Spanish 14 Aug 81 pp 14-17

[Interview with former Economy Minister Roberto Alemann by Roberto Fernandez Taboada; date and place not given]

[Text] [Question] How would you describe the business debt rescheduling announced on Friday? It is not a bond...What is it then?

[Answer] That's what I would like to know too. It's a "facility," but they aren't saying who's providing it. I would guess (this is my interpretation because the communique is not clear) that the Central Bank is advancing funds by creating currency to pay off the debts owed to the customers of banks backing the regime, and in order for this funding to be across-the-board, so that the banks can't say: this fellow yes and that fellow no, it has to be guaranteed by the government. Instead of issuing a physical bond in the form of a slip of paper, they will most likely use another kind of Treasury guarantee.

[Question] What about the previous attempt at a rollover? The claim is that it didn't work because rediscounting was underused...

[Answer] Does 12 trillion pesos seem too little to you? And this 12 trillion comes from estimating the average deposits in financial institutions in March, to which a rate of 4 percent was applied in both May, June and July. The figure was estimated at the time at 12 trillion pesos. Then the banks earmarked what they earmarked. I don't know how much it was, but it must have been quite a bit, to judge by the Central Bank's balance sheet, which as of 7 August showed credits to financial institutions of 25.2 trillion, compared to 11.8 trillion at the end of the year.

[Question] Does that include what was paid out in guarantees against the BIR [Regional Trade Bank] and the other liquidated banks?

[Answer] No, because that occurred prior to this. The Central Bank report says that the financial institutions were given 12.8 trillion on 7 August, whereas the figure stood at 2.4 trillion at the end of last year; in other words, there has been an increase of 10.4 trillion in 7 months, most of it since April. If you feel that that's not very much, well I don't know. I think it's a lot of money.

[Question] Noetheless, the man in the street has a different idea. People are saying that the banks refused to roll over the debts of companies that were in poor shape, and the rediscounting turned out to be very scant.

[Answer] I am assuming that in selecting their good risk customers to refund their money (because if the banks do not refund, they have to pay the Central Bank), the banks excluded the customers that did not deserve this sort of credibility. The argument that you have just presented to me could well come from the poor risk borrowers, who in fact were the ones who asked the government for a nondiscriminatory rescheduling system, which is what they have just come up with or are in the process of implementing.

[Question] Do you think that most people feel that the first rediscoun was not enough?

[Answer] I don't know and I will not prejudge. When I don't know something, I do not offer an opinion. The banks are the ones that know and they have not released comprehensive information. What we do know is that the people who complained are very powerful politically and were able to lobby the government into expanding the other funding, the ill-termed rediscount, by extending it from 4 to 6 years for everyone, on the one hand, and, on the other, by making it indiscriminate so that the banks would have no say in the matter since it is government-guaranteed. Thus, if a poor risk client does not pay up, the government will ultimately assume the bad debt. This is the key to the whole thing. And this can be done with a physical bond or a guarantee. It's merely a question of technique. It's of no major importance. The essential thing is that the guarantees will boost government spending by at least 40 trillion pesos, assuming that all of the banks join the system.

[Question] What percent of government spending does that come to?

[Answer] The national budget for this year was around 70 trillion pesos, but it's going to be increased and amended in a few weeks. We now have to add 40 to this 70, but even before this there was another 12, plus 3 more earmarked for aid to provincial banks and to help harried borrowers.

[Question] Do you mean to say that we would be increasing the initial budget 70 percent?

[Answer] That's right, and by this subsidy alone. But look, the State will assume a debt or a guarantee, and the fact is that it cannot assume a debt on something that it has not spent. By definition, if the government assumes this debt and applies it to a subsidy, it is spending money. It's the same as when the government takes in the proceeds from PRODE [the lottery] and then apportions them among the soccer clubs. It takes with one hand and distributes with the other. In this case, it takes money from the Central Bank and redistributes it among debtors in accordance with certain conditions. This is public spending in the form of subsidies, just like all of the others that the government engages in. But it's still government spending even

though it's not recorded in the budget and not approved in the official budget act. This is the Central Bank's off-budget system, which can be used for anything. This is the same thing that the government does when it promotes exports. It pays exporters money that the Central Bank doesn't have. It creates it out of thin air and does it through the Treasury as the trustee.

[Question] How much inflation is all this going to cause?

[Answer] The Economy Ministry estimated inflation this year at 130 percent for retail prices and 150 percent in wholesale prices. But now, while the monetary base is growing steadily at 11-odd percent a month, the estimated budget revision is said to be based on the hypothesis that wholesale prices will rise 6 percent a month, which equals exactly 100 percent a year. I think it's going to be higher, but I don't know when the impact of inflation on prices is going to be felt. The currency printing that this ill-termed bond is going to lead to will have an additional impact. It works like this: there are two kinds of debtors receiving this funding: the good risks and the bad risks. The good risks do not need these facilities, because they are the ones who make their interest payments, pay their taxes and reduce their debts by paying off the principal as they raise funds to do so. This is the definition of a good risk. The bad risks are the ones that do not pay taxes and do not make their interest payments but instead ask the banks to add the interest on to their debts. These are the bad risks, the ones that do not deserve credit. Both groups are being bailed out. So then, what's going to happen with the money that the good risks have set aside to pay off the interest and principal on the debts that are now being converted to 7-year terms, with a 3-year grace period and interest payments that fall due every 6 months instead of every month as before? What's going to happen to the companies that set this money aside, reoutfitted their plants, trained their personnel, etc, as opposed to the ones that did none of this? But this bailout will have another effect in connection with the mechanics of banking and finance operations. The 40 or more trillion pesos that the government is guaranteeing over 7 years will cause the financial institutions taking part to be illiquid for 7 years. They are going to lend the money they receive for 7-year terms, but the money they receive is for 7 or 30 days. How are they to know what kind of spread they will be working with? This has to do with operations, but as far as the essence of the system is concerned, this amount of credit is going to be nationalized. Forty percent of credit is going to be nationalized.

[Question] Nationalized?

[Question] Of course, because the government is furnishing it. This kind of credit would never be provided for 7 years privately, on the free market.

[Question] But it is being provided through the banks. The banks, not the government, are the lenders...

[Answer] It's the government, the Central Bank that is giving it to the banks under government guarantees, and the banks extend the credit; they are agents.

[Question] In other words, if the debts are not paid off, the government is entitled to take over the company?

[Answer] Of course. If a borrower does not pay off, the bank can get the money from the government, and if it can, the government collects from the debtor company. It then becomes the company's main creditor and takes it over, forces it into bankruptcy or does what it feels like. But the credit arrangement is not the one set by the marketplace. Once this system is in place, they are suddenly going to have money available. What are they going to use it for? This is the big problem. If the cashier is the one in charge in the company, he will use it to pay off the biggest risk liabilities. And as every babe in arms knows, the biggest risk liabilities are the liabilities in foreign currency. What size reserves does the Central Bank have to cope with this?

[Question] At least \$5 billion...

[Answer] How much of this is available, I don't know. The second effect: if the good risk borrowers do this with the greater liquidity they obtain, the Central Bank might lose reserves. And because the marketplace knows all, this is going to induce a marginal number of holders of time deposits to switch from fixed term to foreign currency, because if the debtors do not have confidence in the peso and pay off their liabilities in foreign currency, there is no reason why the creditors in fixed term pesos should know more than the big borrowers. The people with the most experience in the marketplace are the ones who regularly manage capital carefully and can assess the risks of each of the debts that they incur. The fixed term holders do not necessarily have this ability but they follow the people in the know. And many of these debtors also have fixed term deposits with cashbook surpluses. At any point we could have a situation similar to what we saw in April, May and June. The psychological consequences of a situation like that are well-known.

[Question] Could this make exchange controls necessary?

[Answer] It means we will have to do the proper thing. I'm only pointing out the consequences. It will have other effects later. Companies, especially the poor risks, are going to use part of their surplus liquidity to temporarily cut prices because right now they are in a tough spot and have to sell at more or less high prices because otherwise they don't make money. They are going to engage in unfair competition with the good risks in their own market, because the good risks have done everything necessary to stay in the market, to avoid the consequences of the inflationary situation and are thus on the verge of getting ahead. And with the forthcoming upswing in demand (which always comes by itself), they would have gotten out of their problems. But now they are going to be hurt. I call this the unfair competition effect of this bailout: the people who wagered their money are being punished. In our

market today, banks do not give 7-year loans because they have no way to roll them over. A bank lends money at a lengthy term like that as it obtains the funds in the marketplace. A bank is just a money middleman, not a creator of capital, and in this instance the banks are still taking in money at 7 or 30 days and are going to be lending it for 7-year terms, but not because they want to or because the market so permits, but because the government is interfering. This is a partial, albeit not total nationalization of lending. And I think that boosting government spending is not good and that creating money out of thin air and nationalizing credit is appalling.

[Question] There are business chambers that say that this has to be done because the government has done them so much damage in recent years that it somehow has to try to make up for it with this aid.

[Answer] This is the restitution theory that the Industrial Union formally invoked in the document approved at that plenary meeting a few weeks ago. It's a theory based on a sophism. If the government had such an obligation, we would first have to calculate back in time, and all of the borrowers would have to return what they took away from savers over many years through interest rates lower than inflation. The profit that they made by getting loans at 40 percent when our runaway inflation was at 600, 700 and 900 percent would then have to be quoted in current pesos by means of some monetary index, and the restitution would be made against that. I don't even want to think about who the winners and losers would be in this numbers game. Under the same theory, we would have to do the same thing between landowners and leaseholders. The leaseholders had their leases frozen by law, while the prices of their products increased a lot more than their leases, and thus they coldly expropriated the land from its owners. In this case too we would have to correct backwards and adjust for inflation. And we would have to do the same thing for landlords and renters in the cities. And if we were going to tally up these restitution accounts, we would probably also have to do it with all of the people who benefit from some sort of tariff protection, which is also an implicit subsidy. This would take us until judgment day.

[Question] How did you arrive at the figure of 40 trillion?

[Answer] It's a very simple calculation. The communique announcing the bailout, published in the papers last Saturday, says that as of 30 April (which is the key date) liabilities totaled 101 trillion pesos. Forty trillion are reportedly industrial liabilities and half of these would be rolled over, which comes to 20 trillion. Sixty-one trillion are not industrial, and 40 percent of these would be rolled over, which comes to 24 trillion. Adding the two together, we get 44 trillion.

[Question] Can we say or somehow infer whether or not Argentine companies are too much in debt?

[Answer] Some are and some are not. The ratio must never be in terms of GDP; it must be in terms of a company's net worth. That is the ratio: how

many pesos it owes in relation to its own net worth. Net worth consists of invested capital, accumulated reserves and undistributed profits. The world's economies are strong or weak to the extent that their companies are highly capitalized or highly indebted.

[Question] It so happens that in Argentina, because of inflation, businessmen operated until a short time ago on the theory that it was a good idea to work with borrowed money.

[Answer] And they were right while interest rates were substantially lower than the inflation rate. But that's not the case now, and it hasn't been for a long time.

[Question] Did businessmen in general fail to alter their thinking when this change occurred?

[Answer] Some did, and some didn't. This is what distinguishes good risks from poor risks, the people who deserve credit and the people who don't.

[Question] What does the international financial world think of us?

[Answer] I do not yet know how foreign bankers reacted, because this was announced on Friday. But based on prior discussions regarding the bond (which was what it was called for several weeks) with bankers visiting Argentina, I can say that they have all been bewildered. None of them could understand why a country would do such a thing. They can't understand how a country that has an extremely high inflation rate, the highest in the world once again, could be printing even more money in an attempt to solve the problem. No one can understand this, and I don't either.

[Question] But how can these companies be bailed out, or don't they have to be bailed out?

[Answer] Why does the government have to bail out all our companies? Where in the constitution does it say that?

[Question] Nowhere. But the political cost will be very high if the companies fold.

[Answer] Yes, but what is the political cost of the hyperinflationary impact of all this?

[Question] We've already experienced runaway inflation, but not the other thing.

[Answer] When we experienced it 6 years ago, we had negative interest rates. This time, interest rates are not negative, and if there are any, they're going to be very slight, not with a spread like before, from 40 to 1,000 percent. In those days, companies came in with debts and left without them. Inflation liquidated their debts, but not this time.

[Question] Inflation swept away their problems.

[Answer] That's why the big borrowers were the major proponents of inflation, because they kept their assets and eliminated their liabilities.

[Question] But the big borrowers are pressuring this time too...

[Answer] They don't realize. Perhaps they think that the past can be repeated, and the fact is that it can't...

[Question] What haven't they realized? Positive interest rates? Or are they going to advocate a controlled money market?

[Answer] There are a lot of people who do advocate one.

[Question] Can the assertion be made that over a period of many years, through subsidized credit, excessive protection, etc, money has been transferred from the average citizen to business via inflation?

[Answer] It has been transferred from savers, workers and retired persons to owners of industry.

[Question] In other words, the governments that have in general been classified as populist or of the masses have, in fact, helped the rich...

[Answer] They've enriched the "haves." That's right. That's why they're called populist, because they deceive the people.

[Question] To what extent have the rules of the game changed with the decontrol of interest rates?

[Answer] Look, when money is expensive, you have to use more of your own capital because in a business, capital has to yield a higher rate of return than the cost of money. Otherwise, it's not a business; otherwise, you're working for third parties. With a negative rate, your capital earns a lot when you borrow from third parties. With a positive rate, you have to borrow less. These are the signals that the market has been sending out for years now, since mid-1977, but some people did not understand them, wagered on the opposite and are now trying to take back their bets.

[Question] But they're coming out ahead...

[Answer] We'll see.

[Question] How can they not be?

[Answer] The rate of the bailout funding might be slightly negative, but hardly at all. It is going to exert upward pressure on all other loans, however, in my judgment. So then, on the average, they are going to pay more, not less.

[Question] Alright, but if, as we saw before, the dollar goes up, interest rates will too. Furthermore, if things turn out as you anticipate, there is also the spread factor, which could also help boost interest rates. This is inflationary and recessionary. What will have been resolved then?

[Answer] Nothing. On the contrary, things will have gotten worse. I contend that our recession, which is in its fourth quarter, is not going to last longer than a fifth and that there have long been signs of a recovery without any of this. If the government goes through with the bailout, there is going to be a downturn again because business can't afford that kind of interest rate.

[Question] Do you see signs of a recovery right now?

[Answer] Yes.

[Question] In what sectors?

[Answer] In export sectors. The sharp devaluation has revived exports, and the ripple effect has touched other activities. Everything takes time, but I talk with industrialists and look at statistics, and I can see that some sectors are beginning to pick up again. Recessionary crises are not surmounted all of a sudden, nor do all sectors enter and emerge from them at the same time. But we can now see that the crisis is hitting bottom and has probably already done so. Under normal conditions of stability, the economy would straighten out by itself next year, but if another runaway inflation is tacked on, it will come to a halt again.

[Question] But if everything were so simple...There's something here that I don't understand.

[Answer] It's a political problem, because harried debtors are the strongest force in the country today; they have the biggest lobby in the country.

[Question] And since there are so many of them too...

[Answer] According to the ADEBA [Argentine Bank Association] survey, it would seem that there are not. I know that there is strong opposition among banks. The Bank Association does not seem to be at all happy with this solution, and I think that the best thing they could do would be to distribute a circular to their associates recommending right away that they not join the system. Then, since this is going to take a couple of months to be implemented, in view of our legislative experience with the CAL [Legislative Advisory Commission] (consider the moratorium that has not yet been called), the concern that I am voicing in advance might have spread by that time and reached the Junta, and as you know, each member of the Junta is above his chief of staff. And the chiefs of staff are above the staff officers who sit on the CAL. So, if extreme concern spreads nationwide, the Junta might become the repository of that concern and instruct its staffs to order the CAL officers not to approve this, whereupon the whole thing would come to naught.

[Question] What, then, is the other way to deal with the current business situation?

[Answer] The normal way indicated by our commercial legislation. The Commerce Code has a section devoted to insolvency proceedings and bankruptcies. What I'm telling you is not at all pleasant, but it's the way to resolve things.

[Question] But this would cause major unemployment...

[Answer] Why? On the contrary, high inflation is what is going to cause major unemployment. That's a proven fact. The second procedure, which is already being utilized, is the so-called creditors' meeting. A harried borrower can't pay up; he calls together his creditors, and the commercial code judge sets a date within so many months. At that meeting, the debtor presents a payment plan that usually entails a scaledown of the debt, either a request for nonmarket interest rates or no interest at all. The creditors assess the situation and if they feel that the company is viable and if they want to continue providing goods or financial services, they agree to the scaledown or negotiate another with the company. It's then approved, and the company has a new lease on life. No new money is created in this case. Each creditor provides his own credit and takes his business risks. This is the system that our constitution establishes, unlike the one being set up now, and it is under this system that problems are resolved. And then there will be cases of very harried debtors who will go and talk with their financial institutions and tell them that they are not in a position to continue making payments and that they are having difficulties in the market. They will then assess the situation with their creditors before going before a commercial code judge. It could be that they are on the verge of introducing a product that will be very popular on the market and they might just convince their creditors that this item will make them enough profits; so the creditors will wait to see what happens. And then there might be other harried debtors who throw in the towel and say "I've had it with this business" and then look for someone to buy them out. This is called an outright sale; this is called bringing in a new partner; this is called merger by absorption, etc. These are the procedures that have always been utilized in Argentina and elsewhere to take care of these kinds of things.

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GOVERNMENT INERTIA, DIVISIONS THREATEN PROCESS

Buenos Aires SOMOS in Spanish 14 Aug 81 pp 4-6

[Article by Tabare Areas]

[Text] The man got on the subway at Miserere Plaza, heading downtown. He put his briefcase on his lap, opened up his paper and folded it closed again exactly three stops later, looking somewhat perplexed and wondering: "What's going on in this country?" And there was good reason for his musing: in the paper he had read remarks by three more than authorized spokesmen. "I'm not Mandrake the Magician" (Adm Armando Lambruschini, referring to how long the country's recovery would take); "People in Argentina eat 7 days a week" (Brig Omar Graffigna) and "If the Radicals or the Peronists were to assume power today, they would soon be kicked out by a military movement" (Gen Albano Harguindeguy).

On Monday, the former interior minister and current adviser to President Roberto Eduardo Viola went to Tandil and spoke for 45 minutes straight to the provincial delegates of the Conservative Union. What he said there was chronicled by the official agency itself, TELAM, in its cable number 48, prompting this essential question among people in the street and political circles: What, when all is said and done, is the government's political strategy, if in fact it has one? Harguindeguy himself pointed out that "it is becoming very difficult to express the government's thoughts on national policy," and those who are familiar with the inner workings of government also know that such remarks would not be made (or shared) by Viola's three other political advisers: Jose Antonio Romero Feris, Guillermo Acuna Anzorena and Francisco Moyano.

The next day, Peronist Nestor Carrasco, a member of the multiparty association, hastened to say: "I don't think that the government is playing the card that Harguindeguy has, but what I don't understand is why the former minister continues to speak out, and in that tone too." With these musings Carrasco was merely confirming something that political circles have been talking a great deal about in recent days: the different tacks within the government for pursuing its political strategy. In this regard, Casa Rosada sources are not denying that Harguindeguy is doing his political job in the center lane, trying to get all of the parties so inclined ideologically to join in a

centrist movement that can offer a comprehensive program for dealing with the nation's problems. Allegedly involved in this same task (though with some shades of difference) is Francisco Moyano from Mendoza, who served as a political adviser to President Jorge Rafael Videla. The same sources claim that Moyano and Harguindeguy are full-fledged spokesmen of former Minister Jose Alfredo Martinez de Hoz's political line.

According to original plans, Romero Feris, Acuna Anzorena and Moyano were supposed to move intelligently among the leaders of political parties in order to gather information, spell out intentions and "pave the way for talks free from ill-will and mistrust." The advisers were supposed to do their job silently while the Interior Ministry worked on the program that would eventually loosen the ban on political activity. The strategy that the government developed in March included another important point that it regarded as helpful in hastening the political pace: resolving the legal status of Maria Estela Martinez de Peron in order to relax tensions.

Amid all this hubbub, political minister Horacio Tomas Liendo has maintained a more than suggestive silence, prompting speculation and conjecture that can be summed up in this question: Does the government have an answer for this touchy political juncture? The fact is, sources stress, that the advisers deal directly with Viola, from whom they receive orders and suggestions; Minister Liendo reportedly attends only some of these meetings and goes about pursuing the government's strategy independently, but always in concurrence with the president.

Liendo's political team is made up of retired Gen Adan Alonso (undersecretary of the interior) and Doctors Eduardo Cesar Amaro Pourciel (undersecretary of institutional affairs) and Domingo Cavallo (technical undersecretary), as well as Rosendo Fraga, the young head of advisers. The comment has been made that with a marked degree of political introversion, Liendo directs the group in accordance with President Viola's orders. Sources close to this group say that the government did not take a definite and specific stand on the rally promoted by the Radical Civic Union because it wanted to wait and see how "the incident would settle out" and hear the views of the political sectors to be consulted so that it could then, and promptly, act on the basis of what it found out. All indications are, however, that the multisector gathering is filling the political vacuum created by the absence of an imaginative and convincing government program, to the point that someone went so far as to say: "It seems that the politicians are now playing with the white pieces..."

On Monday the 10th, Brig Omar Graffigna was in Mendoza, where he virulently attacked statism, charging that it was the "most serious of all the ills plaguing the Argentine economy." It was Air Force Day, and he said quite emphatically: "The disease has to be attacked at its causes, and to this end we must abandon the wishful thinking that we can defeat it with technical contrivances, regardless of how ingenious they might be." This assertion caused surprise, inasmuch as this point (reducing the size of government and

government spending) was one of the priority goals announced in 1976, when the Armed Forces took charge. Has anything changed 5 years later?

On Tuesday morning Bernardo Neustadt called former Finance Secretary Juan Alemann and went on the air (Radio Mitre, the "Nuevo Dia" program) with an interview that wasted no words. Alemann said in response to Graffigna that "actions speak louder than words" and recalled that the depots that Customs has at Ezeiza belong to the Air Force and that they are not exactly a model of efficiency and thrift "because every day I read that merchandise is ruined by exposure to the elements." Neustadt replied that he knew that Viola had instructed his ministers to speed up the return of companies to private hands, whereupon the former minister pressed the point that the president had the means at his disposal to furnish an example. He then cited the printshop that does the Official Gazette (it functions directly under the authority of the president's office), claiming that it is poorly printed, out-of-register and almost always late. He added that there were printshops in the country that could do a better quality job at lower cost.

In the wake of Graffigna's words many people looked to the economic sphere and noted that what was supposed to be a debate on a financial instrument (the bond to roll over business debts) had become a veritable shackle on the government and little less than a national priority. Thus, in recent days the notion persisted that in the absence of a clear-cut statement by the president, the economic ministers had become sector delegates and lost their overview without being able to reach an agreement, because what they were ultimately debating was who should receive the benefits and how and who would pay them and in what form.

This issue goes far beyond economics and reflects another of the government's political flanks as well. Economy Ministry sources are worried about the rise in prices, and LA NACION said in an editorial on Monday the 10th: "...inflation is a symptom of a political vacuum, of a government that cannot or does not want to say 'no' in the battle among sectors to take a bigger slice of overall national revenues."

After his speech in Mendoza, Graffigna found himself facing a group of newsmen, who questioned him about the economic situation. He said: "The problems are not as severe as people are saying. We are well-off in Argentina and we still eat 7 days a week. Few countries can claim that they eat 7 days a week." This unusual way of describing reality was not the only thing that caught people's attention. On that same Monday, Adm Armando Lambruschini made a morning visit to the Palermo country fair and did not try to evade the swarm of reporters. One of them asked him how long he thought the country's recovery would take, to which the commander in chief of the navy replied: "I'm not Mandrake the Magician." He then said that in order for the new economic measures to yield results "it will take 4 or 6 months, according to the economists, but this does not mean a recovery."

On Wednesday morning the top leaders of the intersector commission (CNT [National Labor Commission] and the 20) arrived at the Economy Ministry. They identified themselves at the front desk and went up to Minister Lorenzo Sigaut's office. Already there were the minister of labor, Julio Cesar Porcile, and members of the Argentine Industrial Union. Jorge Triaca, Ruben Marcos, Jorge Lujan, Juan Rachini and Enrique Venturini were there for a key meeting, both for organized labor and for the government. This was the second tripartite gathering aimed at hammering out a settlement between labor and management with government approval. The government is pushing this strategy at all costs as the most feasible way of "eliminating confrontations that could create social friction," according to a source very close to Minister Porcile's office.

No one would have predicted before stepping into the office that the meeting would last almost 5 hours. The door swung open at 1255 hours, and out came Jacques Hirst, the president of the Argentine Industrial Union, who said: "This will be over in 15 minutes." At 1630 hours, however, ministry staff arrived with sandwiches and soft drinks. At 1730 hours, Minister Lorenzo Sigaut emerged, looking somewhat tired, to outline what they had talked about over their four rounds of coffee. "We told the workers and employers about our program for the rest of the year and 1982. The rest of the meeting consisted of a lengthy, friendly and, to me, interesting, exchange of views," he said. Their contacts, which the General Labor Confederation is opposed to, so far seem to have generated solely a difficult string of talks, explanations and recesses without concrete results.

As this edition of SOMOS was going to print, Minister Horacio Tomas Liendo was reporting in full to the Executive Branch on the political situation. His report included two key points for shaping the political offensive that a number of government circles themselves are calling for: the start of a fresh round of talks with party leaders (this time without press conferences, tape recorders or stenographers) and the lifting of the political ban.

8743
CSO: 3010/1724

FURTHER BIO DATA ON NEW NAVY COMMANDER ANAYA

Buenos Aires SOMOS in Spanish 14 Aug 81 p 10

[Article by Jorge Vidal]

[Text] When the meeting of the Council of Admirals began at 0915 hours last Tuesday on the 14th floor of the Libertad Building, all of the 30 vice and rear admirals kept their eyes on their chief of staff, Vice Adm Jorge Isaac Anaya, (trying to surmise what he was feeling). In contrast, Comdr Armando Lambruschini had been keeping his secret (the name of his successor) for a long time.

During the 4 hours that the admirals' meeting lasted, the command's telephones kept ringing with the same question: Has he appointed him yet? But the lines to the 14th floor remained silent, and the reply did not come until 1245 hours, when the suspense was broken, even though many already knew the outcome. Among the small groups huddled in the corridors, which were busier than usual, the "puff of white smoke" put an end to speculations. "It's over. Anaya is going to be our commander in chief for 3 years," men were heard to say.

But now that his appointment was a fact, another question arose. What is the new commander like? To those who know him, he is a professional through and through, almost 55 years of age, a light smoker, says what he has to and likes to drive his own car. (He had a serious accident on 6 November 1979.) But where Anaya appears remote is on a political level. According to navy circles, his opinions in this regard are unknown, and he is said to reserve them for his chats with a few superior officers. Nonetheless, the feeling is that in this sphere (and on some points) he will be much less flexible than Lambruschini.

Those who are monitoring the course that the navy might take recalled that at their meeting the admirals analyzed the development of the Process and set forth the groundwork on which the new commander will operate: "To continue implementing the necessary measures so that through suitable methods of coexistence and cooperation, we can fully create a government that has authority, that respects the rights and freedoms of citizens and that can protect the nation both from the demagogic and anarchic populism that has caused so much damage and from any sort of totalitarianism."

The council also asked him to continue exerting all the efforts under way with determination and vigor, qualities that reportedly have distinguished Anaya in his professional career, which has been his only sphere of action. This strict professionalism (a retired officer told SOMOS) raised doubts that Lambruschini would lean towards Anaya, whom some consider an officer lacking political experience.

Meanwhile, navy circles feel that Anaya, who is by nature reserved, will be much more so until 11 September, when he takes over the command. Within the Military Junta, Anaya will have something in common with Gen Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri: they are both from the same graduating class (1948).

Where navy sectors do not expect changes is internally. For the time being, they said, he might not make any changes, considering that the retirements and promotions in the branch come at the end of the year.

8743
CSO: 3010/1724

GOVERNMENT TO TAKE CONTROL OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Poor Quality of Service

San Jose LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 16 Jul 81 p 4

[Text] Engineer Mario Fernandez, minister of transportation, announced the government's decision to take control of the transportation services in the metropolitan area. He made this announcement after a short meeting in his office with the principal officials of the Chamber of Transportation.

The reasons for such an agreement were explained by Fernandez in an official four-page document which supports the government's proposal to take temporary control of public transportation in order to operate it under Transportes Metropolitanos [Metropolitan Transportation Service] (TRANSAESA).

According to Engineer Fernandez the reason for the takeover is the poor quality of the service provided, since of 600 existing units only 300 are operating, forcing the public to use the microbuses which are five times as expensive.

The text of the document covering these points reads as follows:

"The government of the republic is extremely concerned over the noticeable deterioration of mass transportation in the metropolitan area of San Jose. In view of the social and legal obligations which it has the duty of discharging for the benefit of the users, the government of the Republic, through the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation, announces the following to the holders of transportation concessions and permits:

- a. That under the Motor Transportation Regulatory Law which authorizes the government to take all measures necessary to maintain the continuity and the efficiency of the transportation service, the government, in conjunction with the technical elements of the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation and other governmental agencies involved in the regulation and control of transportation, is considering various concrete solutions among which one of the possible alternatives would be a temporary governmental takeover of transportation.
- b. That notwithstanding repeated requests made by the national transportation authorities to the current holders of concessions and permits to the effect that they re-structure their businesses for the purpose of making them more efficient and regulate the service in accordance with the citizens' interests, all in conformity with the

Plan for the Sectoring of Routes, requests which were thoroughly discussed both individually and through their representatives, they have neither accepted nor complied with these administrative requirements.

c. That the fleet of vehicles assigned to the metropolitan area does not receive the ordinary maintenance necessary for its service, causing a constantly growing deterioration, which makes the transportation service unsafe and inefficient.

ch. That the number of units which the users should count upon for reasonable daily transportation has decreased, there being reliable reports that the authorized and necessary number of buses is 600 units and that at the present time it has become reduced to 300; obviously, it follows that with such a proportion of buses in service the users are being forced to use the microbus system, the fare of which is five times higher than that of the bus service subsidized by the state.

d. That due to this irregular service, the schedules, the itineraries and even the assigned routes are day after day not being adhered to, all to the detriment of social welfare, a situation which can be seen in the long lines of users who stoically put up with the slow and late arrival of the buses.

e. That the preceding background facts together with others which are a matter of record in the files justify the initiation of cancellation actions as well as of administrative measures designed to protect the users' interests in an attempt to strengthen that service in the basic elements of safety and efficiency.

f. That though the government has the duty to resolve this situation in defense of the interests of the more than 300,000 users, in the event that it has to resort to a temporary takeover, the economic interests of the persons holding concessions or permits will continue to be recognized, in accordance with the law, the expenses incurred as a result of the government's intervention being, of course, subtracted. likewise, the rights of personnel who are now assigned to the enterprises engaged in the service would also not be affected.

g. That the government is willing to sign purchase-and-sale agreements with those holding concessions or permits for the metropolitan area who at this time wish voluntarily to renounce their concessions and to sell their units for their actual value, free of encumbrances, subject to an agreement on the timing of payment and the fixing of interest rates, on the basis of an offer which the National Transportation Chamber will present on these points.

h. That the government emphatically declares its intention to straighten out the metropolitan mass transit and to make it efficient with the participation of private enterprise. Therefore it is not its intention to nationalize that service.

Finally, the government wishes to declare its full determination to permit no further abuses to the detriment of the users and, in line with their interests, to solve within the shortest time possible the problem which has arisen.

San Jose, 15 July 1981.

For its part, the National Transportation Chamber, after an extended general meeting of associates last night resolved to initiate negotiations with the MOPT [Ministry of Public Works and Transportation] starting today.

Ricardo Acuna, secretary general of the Chamber, pointed out that a large number of businessmen (more than 12) are disposed to offer the government a formal option for the sale of their transportation units.

He added that it is expected that the negotiations will be completed as soon as possible, and that for this purpose a committee of three members was established which will be in charge of meeting with officials from the MOPT today starting at 800 hours.

Meanwhile, the transportation men will remain in continuous session at the Chamber.

Possible MOPT Scheme Denounced

San Jose LA NACION in Spanish 18 Jul 81 p 6A

[Article by Rodolfo Martin]

[Text] The board of directors of the National Chamber of Transportation yesterday denounced a possible government conspiracy abetted by several officials of the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation (MOPT).

The alleged purpose of this conspiracy was to create a chaotic situation that would make it possible to issue a decree immediately to establish a state of emergency in this sector and to gain control of all companies in the metropolitan area, in which connection police support could be expected.

These statements were made during a press conference which had been scheduled since day before yesterday by the bus operators' association.

Reporters were told that the main reason for the press conference was to release a document which refuted the statements made by MOPT Minister Mario Fernandez Ortiz last Wednesday.

According to the operators, this plan failed--for the time being--as a result of the position taken by the licensees and the outcome of a meeting with MOPT officials yesterday morning.

Later at about 5:00 pm yesterday, several chamber directors returned to the association's headquarters where they held another meeting with government representatives.

In MOPT circles, a source who did not wish to be identified emphatically rejected the accusations made during the press conference.

The source acknowledged the existence of a document bearing a certain similarity to the one released by the operators, but described it as "a proper legal study that could have provided support for one of the many alternatives for solving the public transportation problem." He insisted that this document--described as a preliminary plan--had not been discussed or approved and that although there are currently differences of opinion between bus operators and MOPT representatives, the intention was to bring the talks to a proper "Costa Rican" conclusion.

Tactics

The chamber's vice president, Mr Luis Gonzalez, stated that they had received information about the MOPT's tactics last Friday through a series of reports which they had gotten from a "deserter." "Now," he added, "we do not know whether they were relevant or not. At that time, we were told about the possible control of all companies in the metropolitan area."

Mr Gonzalez pointed out that Atty Rodrigo Carazo, the president of the republic, and MOPT representatives knew about this document--concerning the control--since last Tuesday.

Mr Carlos Quesada, another member of the chamber's board of directors, stated that the chief executive at that time rejected the idea of immediately publishing the decree. It was later decided to publicly reveal the document, which Minister Fernandez Ortiz released to the national press on Wednesday.

"The idea was," Mr Gonzalez explained, "that operators would become alarmed and would take a number of steps, such as refusing to allow the buses to operate.

"Then," he added, "with the reaction of riders, a chaotic situation would develop, which would enable the MOPT to rely on the police to proclaim an emergency and to seize control." According to the chamber's directors, this situation would have apparently taken place on Thursday, when the decree was expected to be published.

"However," Mr Quesada remarked, "operators did not fall into this 'trap,' the public did not turn against us and the plan had to be abandoned, at least for now."

The licensees described the appearance of this alleged decree as a "disloyal" act at a time when talks were being held to arrange the sale of buses by operators to the government.

Mr Carlos Quesada pointed out that they had not found out about this alleged plan before, because it was a matter of the "utmost secrecy." Even the Metropolitan Transportation Company, Inc. (TRANSMESA), which supposedly would have had charge of the routes, did not know about it.

MOPT

An MOPT spokesman emphatically rejected "any charge that even implies that we planned any action against the operators or their rights." This official added that if the chamber has any information, it should immediately divulge it so that the matter can be investigated.

Atty Juan Mena, director of the Department of Transportation, also said that the possible action devised by the MOPT to find some solution for those routes with poor service had no character of "nationalization, divestiture or confiscation."

"It was," he explained, "a legal hypothetical situation in which the operator was replaced by a government representative, without implying that the operator would have forfeited his ownership or his rights. He would also have continued to receive his funds."

Mr Mena described the document released yesterday by the operators as "the opinion of a group that wants to express its ideas and, although they are not the same as those of the MOPT, has the right to do so, since we live in a democracy."

He said that the most important thing was that "as a group of people trying to find a solution to the problem of bus service, each of us should express his opinion, but always in a decent manner."

Yesterday, the operators refuted, one by one, Minister Fernandez' statements in which he submitted the reasons why the MOPT believes that poor public transportation service is being provided.

The bases for the talks which these two groups are holding to arrange bus sales were also confirmed yesterday. It is possible that a formal document in this regard may be signed as early as next Monday, beginning the final round of negotiations.

11915

CSO: 3010/1606

AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN MOPT, BUS OWNERS

San Jose LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 29 Jul 81 p 3

[Text] A total of 200 buses and 80 smaller buses will be sold to the government as a result of the negotiations between the National Transport Association and officials of MOPT [Ministry of Public Works and Transportation], which ended yesterday.

Shortly after 6:00 p.m. the two sides reached an agreement which calls for the establishment of an arbitral panel to resolve the dispute over the "Class B subsidy" that is limited to the Transmesa buses. This is the only point left unresolved.

Once this aspect has been cleared up, steps will be taken immediately to set up the negotiations for the government's payment of a total of 50 million colones to 11 owners over a period of 6 months and interest of 50,000 colones per unit.

The 200 buses and 80 small buses involved in these negotiations will be obtained with loans from the banking system, securities, and loans from international organizations; also, the idea of issuing bonds has not been rejected.

Meanwhile, some 110 owners who make up the rest of the bus fleet in the metropolitan area (with 550 vehicles) announced a revised version of the Zoning Plan drawn up by the Ministry of Transportation. Last weekend the plan's proponents gave the transportation director, Juan Mena, a document containing the general outline of the points that should be included in the plan.

The document, called the "Alternative Zoning Project," basically differs from the original version in that it discards the system of joint financial management and leaves finances and personnel management in the hands of the individual owners.

At the same time those operating under the plan would have the benefit of advice and contact with the ministry through an advisor.

One point that is the same as under the original plan is the acceptance of zoning. The zones would be set up by agreement and would have from 50 + 100 buses each.

Representatives of the buslines said this new plan was put forward with the idea of protecting the small metropolitan owners, while still recognizing the need to reorganize the bus system.

The new buses for agreement would mean considerable improvements in service, lower operating costs, maintenance more in line with the heavy service demanded of the buses, and finally integration of the lines for the benefit of the users.

Most important, operations conducted under these premises would avoid the necessity of the owners selling their equipment, thus heading off the threat of a partial halt in service.

The above recommendations have been set down in the document previously described by a group of approximately 110 operators, who gathered the opinions of the various sectors affected by the problem.

Among those affected are the Escazu, Guadalupe, Cocisco de Dos Rios, Quesada Duran, and Barrio La Cruz lines, which together with a similar number of companies make up 40 percent of the total number of lines in the metropolitan area.

All endorse the zoning concept with the object of obtaining mutual benefits while avoiding doing harm to private interests.

9015
CSO: 3010/1636

COUNTRY SECTION

COSTA RICA

BRIEFS

REDUCTION IN COFFEE PRICES--The National Wage Council has agreed to reduce by 1.00 colon the price which it had set for coffee sales and has decided that the price per cajuela [16.66 liters] will be 11.00 colones. In its meeting of night before last, the council also changed the increase in the minimum wage for private companies, establishing increases of between 18 and 19 percent, depending on the job. It is hoped that the respective official record will be signed by next Tuesday and that it will be sent to the executive branch on 28 July for final approval. The council's decision of last Tuesday set the price of coffee at 12.00 colones per cajuela, which was an increase of 1.20 colones; the price was formerly 10.00 colones. [Excerpt]
[San Jose LA NACION in Spanish 18 Jul 81 p 6A] 11915

CSO: 3010/1606

MALMIERCA'S MONGOLIAN VISIT DISCUSSED

Honored by Mongolian Counterpart

FL151810 Havana Domestic Television Service in Spanish 1700 GMT 15 Aug 81

[Text] Cuba's Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca has noted in Ulaanbaatar the superb development of Cuban-Mongolian ties. Malmierca made a speech at a banquet hosted in his honor by Mongolia's Foreign Minister Mangalyn Dugersuren and which was attended by Damingiyn Gombojab, member of the MPRP Politburo and Central Committee secretary, and Choynoryn Suren, deputy chairman of Mongolia's Council of Ministers.

Malmierca arrived in the Mongolian People's Republic yesterday on a 4-day official visit as part of a tour of several countries in Asia.

For his part, Foreign Minister Dugersuren said that the first visit to Mongolia by a Cuban foreign minister constitutes an important event for the friendship, fraternity and close cooperation between the two parties, states and peoples.

USSR Peace Initiatives Supported

FL182358 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 18 Aug 81

[Text] Cuba and Mongolia have reiterated their full support for the Soviet Union's peaceful initiatives aimed at improving the international situation. In a communique released in Ulaanbaatar on the official visit by Cuba's Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca to the Mongolian People's Republic, the two countries noted the strong bilateral development of the relations of friendship.

The document also points out the fraternal cooperation existing between Cuba and Mongolia, based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism. The communique underlines the decision of the two countries' governments to further strengthen and broaden unity and cohesion with the Soviet Union and other socialist sister nations.

The Cuba-Mongolia declaration criticizes the NATO plans of deploying U.S. intermediate range missiles in Eastern Europe and the U.S. administration's decision to begin the mass production of the neutron bomb. In addition, the document stresses,

the politico-military rapprochement between Washington and Beijing represents a threat to the security of the peoples and world peace. Socialist countries and all peace-loving forces should redouble common efforts and coordinate their actions directed at deepening the process of detente, peaceful cooperation, and an end to the arms race and the elimination of the danger of a nuclear war, the communique points out.

During the talks held by Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca with Mongolia's Foreign Minister Mangalyn Dugersuren, a cooperation program was signed by the two countries in the fields of culture, science and education for the 1981-1985 5-year period.

Malmierca concluded today his official and friendly visit to the Mongolian People's Republic. Malmierca was accompanied by ambassador Ricardo (Danza), deputy director of the Foreign Ministry Asia and Oceania Department. Malmierca also met with high officials of the MPRP and the Mongolian Government.

CSO: 3010/1756

NEUTRON BOMB DECISION CRITICIZED

Torras' Criticism

FL191235 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 19 Aug 81

[Excerpt] Cuba's most vigorous rejection of the U.S. decision to manufacture neutron bombs was voiced in Geneva by Pelegrin Torras, Cuban vice minister of foreign relations and chief of the Cuban delegation attending the present sessions of the UN Disarmament Committee.

The Cuban delegate said the decision to manufacture the bomb is part of a militaristic program that also includes other measures to step up international tension.

Torras reiterated the challenge to the U.S. Government to define its policy regarding the aggression, blockade, assaults and other attacks staged by the United States against the Cuban revolution and its leaders.

Meanwhile, the White House decision to build a neutron bomb continues to generate a veritable storm of protest worldwide.

MPSP President's Criticism

PA190002 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 18 Aug 81

[Interview with Elena Gil, president of the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples, by Nestor Nunez, presumably in Havana; no date given--recorded]

[Text] [Gil] If one recalls well President Reagan's views, those expressed during his presidential campaign, his decision [on the neutron bomb] cannot surprise us much because the major goal of his administration is to provoke a nuclear war, to unleash a nuclear war under the pretext of U.S. military supremacy. This decision about the neutron bomb is one step, perhaps the most dangerous, toward the Reagan administration's final objective. One thing that leads one to believe this is the fact that the United States made this decision on the neutron bomb without previous consultation with its NATO allies. Reagan must know that previously, when the Carter administration made efforts to deploy the neutron bomb in Europe,

world repudiation was so vigorous and so big that the order to manufacture the bomb had to be contramanded. So Reagan must know that he will encounter similar rejection, beginning with his own allies.

In addition, there is the cynicism of Reagan's attempt to deceive his own allies and the U.S. people by describing the neutron bomb as a defensive weapon, when it is really the most inhumane and destructive of all the weapons of mass destruction. He also describes it as a clean weapon because it annihilates human life but leaves material goods standing for the use of the so-called victor. However, there would be no victor in this kind of nuclear war or in any other. The idea is to make the people of the United States believe that a nuclear war against the Soviet Union is feasible, that it can be won. However, once unleashed, a nuclear war cannot be limited in any way because all the forces stored by both the attacker and the party which has to defend itself from the attack would be unleashed.

Reagan also makes the people of the United States utopically believe that by possessing such a weapon U.S. territory would be safe from such a war. The people of the United States are used to participating in wars outside their territory. They have never really experienced the horrors of a war on their own territory. In this case, however, the people of the United States must realize that a nuclear war would reach their territory, because the United States would be the principal aggressor in such a war.

It is also repulsive that Reagan should have announced his decision precisely on 6 August, when the 36th anniversary of the Hiroshima bomb--which is still taking lives in Japan--was being commemorated.

The WFC, which has already begun an offensive against this situation, has decided to stage a week of protest from 24 to 31 October 1981 to mobilize all national peace committees in a vigorous campaign against the decision to manufacture the neutron bomb, against the arms race and in support of the Soviet Union's peace proposals. These proposals not only include those agreed on at the 26th CPSU Congress, which are part of Leonid Brezhnev's appeal to the parliaments, but also the Soviet Union's last proposal that a ban on the deployment of weapons of any type in the space be included on the agenda of the next UN General Assembly.

[Question] Elena, I would like to know how the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples [MPSP] will support this international struggle against the neutron weapon.

[Answer] Our MPSP is already mobilizing, making statements, releasing interviews with the top leaders of our movement and contacting national peace committees in both Latin America and the United States. I think we can launch a joint offensive by all our peoples. The details of this offensive will be prepared in due time. It will be a simultaneous effort of all the peace committees in Latin America, building toward the week of protest in late October. From now on the preparations will include a propaganda campaign with interviews, publications and explanations to the masses concerning the terrible threat posed by the manufacture of the neutron bomb.

MPSP Scores Bomb

FL211627 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 21 Aug 81

[Text] The Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of Peoples [MPSP] has condemned U.S. President Ronald Reagan's decision regarding the mass production of the neutron bomb. In a statement issued in Havana, the MPSP says that the so-called clean neutron bomb reflects the criminal essence of imperialism since it is designed to kill man and save material wealth for the aggressor.

The MPSP thus joins the mobilization of the world's national peace councils to reject and condemn Reagan's decision. It also demands a dialogue on current issues affecting world security, detente and peace.

ANAP Scores Bomb

FL251745 Havana Domestic Television Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 25 Aug 81

[Text] The National Directorate of the National Association of Small Farmers [ANAP], has expressed, on behalf of all Cuban farmers, its most vigorous condemnation of the U.S. Government's decision to manufacture the neutron bomb.

An ANAP document states that this irresponsible and criminal decision to build a weapon to be used to kill human beings by exterminating them en masse without destroying property is one more indication of the Reagan government's contempt for humanity.

In addition, the document calls on farmers worldwide and on all organizations to make vigorous statements regarding this abominable decision and again state with all their strength: no to the neutron bomb.

CSO: 3010/1752

U.S. ACTIVITIES IN HAITI DISCUSSED

Base Installation Noted

PA211502 Havana International Service in Spanish 2310 GMT 20 Aug 81

["Our America" commentary]

[Text] Once again, U.S. imperialism and the Haitian regime are conniving to set aside a portion of Haiti's territory to install a U.S. military base.

According to reports, the places under consideration are the same ones that have been mentioned on other occasions, i.e., Tortuga Island, Mole-Saint-Nicolas, Gonave Island and St Marc Point. The U.S. attempt to seize part of Haiti is nothing new, but previous efforts in this direction were not successful because of the international scandal that arose in connection with the negotiations.

The plans to install the military base in Haiti are combined with plans to establish tourist centers, which are appropriate for gambling and drug trafficking activities and have thus whetted the appetite of U.S. businesses and unscrupulous Haitian dealers.

Having learned from previous failures, both the United States and the Haitian tyranny have tried to keep the negotiations for the yielding of Haitian territory to the United States under close wraps. According to a charge raised by the committee of solidarity with Haiti headquartered in Montreal, Canada, Mole-Saint-Nicolas, on the island's northeastern tip, has been chosen for this murky negotiation, the basic aspects of which have apparently been concluded.

The complaint adds that the relinquishment of sovereignty over this part of Haiti's territory would be covered up with a bilateral agreement that would actually consist of a sale of Mole-Saint-Nicolas for a price not yet agreed to but which ranges between \$100 million and \$600 million.

Several businessmen in this Haitian locality are promoting the unpatriotic negotiation in hopes of reaping huge benefits. To achieve their ends, the U.S. imperialists are not only making lavish offers of money but exerting political pressure. It has been learned that the recent visit to Haiti by Gen Vernon Walter, special envoy of the Washington government and former CIA deputy director, was closely connected with this illegitimate negotiation by which a strategically located portion of Haiti's territory would be placed in U.S. hands.

It is also known that the U.S. imperialists have threatened to suspend the aid they are giving to Jean Claude Duvalier's tyranny if, for some reason, any opposition is raised to this concession.

The growing revolutionary struggle in Central America and the Caribbean has prompted the United States to increase its military enclaves in the area as a way to smother the revolutionary movements. The imperialists are not satisfied with the many military bases they have in the colonized island of Puerto Rico, the usurped Panamanian territory around the Canal and the Cuban territory of Guantanamo, which the United States is holding against the express wishes of the Cuban people.

If this relinquishment of Haitian territory to the United States is consummated, not only will Haiti's sovereignty be further trampled upon, but the island will become one more base to be used by yankee imperialism against the struggles of the Central American, Caribbean and Haitian peoples. In addition, it would pave the way for the brothels, gambling casinos and other centers of corruption that usually go together with U.S. military bases.

Upon raising this charge, the committee of solidarity with Haiti asks for the support of progressive and revolutionary forces in the world in order to prevent this new affront to Haiti.

Part of Militarization Plans

FL221746 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1045 GMT 22 Aug 81

[Commentary by Roberto Morejon, read by announcer]

[Text] Three trips to Haiti by former U.S. General Vernon Walters in the past 6 months have aroused the interest of world opinion, especially because two of these visits were secret. Despite the strict secrecy, the democratic media have learned of the repugnant maneuver planned by Vernon Walters and the so-called president-for-life, Jean-Claude Duvalier.

The United States is trying to set a definitive price for the concession of Haitian land where a military base would then be built, designed to be used as regional gendarme. The Pentagon has offered \$300 million but dictator Duvalier initially asked for more and consequently showed a certain amount of disgust. But as is known, this comic-opera clown is condemned to accept the offer in the end since he is nothing without the permanent aid of the White House.

Although the exact location of the base is still to be determined, several spots have been considered: the northwestern peninsula of St Nicolas, Gonave Island, the tip of St Marc and Tortuga Island, this last one a pirate haven in the 17th century. Today's freebooters again want to take the region as an interventionist bastion, especially because of the increase in revolutionary ferment in Central America, the victory of a people's government in Grenada and the long-standing interest in isolating Cuba.

Indeed, the selection of Haiti to build a military enclave there has not been an arbitrary choice. It is very close to our country--the two nations are separated only by the windward passage, which washes the eastern shores of Cuba.

Moreover, the United States is trying to obtain the free services of the Duvalier heir in order to watch all maritime movement in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico and have a stronghold available to give support to like-minded neighboring governments such as the ones in the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Haiti itself.

U.S. interventionist plans seem to be in the advanced stages because Reagan is giving signs of impatience to obtain the facilities requested from the regime in Port Au Prince. So much so that only a few days ago several Haitian radio hams landed in (Navaja) Island, 55 km from Haiti, and there unexpectedly ran into yankee marines who had violated the sovereignty of the cay and were getting ready for war exercises.

The militarization of the hemisphere is the immediate goal of U.S. imperialism and to this end it has profited from Jean-Claude Duvalier's territorial cession. It is the duty of world opinion to condemn these U.S. attempts to increasingly turn the Caribbean into a flaming sea. The forthcoming continental conference of solidarity with Haiti scheduled for September in Panama City should serve as an appropriate forum for a denunciation of this sort.

CSO: 3010/1756

COMMENTARY ON U.S. IN CENTRAL AMERICA

PA201909 Havana International Service in Spanish 2310 GMT 19 Aug 81

["Our America" Commentary]

[Text] There are increasing reports of a vast U.S. imperialist plan against the revolutionary movement of Central America, especially against the Salvadoran patriots and the Sandinist process in Nicaragua. In confirmation of the fact that preparations for that plan are being accelerated Gen Romeo Lucas Garcia, chief of the bloodthirsty Guatemalan tyranny, and Jaime Abdul Gutierrez and Jose Napoleon Duarte, the heads of the genocidal military-Christian Democratic Junta of El Salvador, paid surprise visits to Honduras last week within 24 hours of each other.

These executioners of their respective peoples met with a general of the same stripe, Policarpo Paz Garcia, chief of the Honduran regime, and afterward the press was told that they had discussed only economic relations among the three Central American countries.

Naturally, no one believed that, because it is a known fact that the subject of their meetings was quite different. According to a charge leveled by the Honduran Revolutionary University Force [FUR], the United States is coordinating the organization of a large-scale military action, initially to deal with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] in El Salvador and subsequently to be launched against the new Nicaragua.

This counterrevolutionary military operation will involve Salvadoran, Guatemalan and Honduran troops, under the direction of U.S. advisers; Puerto Rican mercenaries; former Somozist national guardsmen, already stationed in Honduras; and terrorists of Cuban origin.

The same day on which Gen Romeo Lucas Garcia visited Tegucigalpa, 20 additional U.S. Green Berets arrived in Honduras to, it was explained, advise the Honduran troops stationed along the Salvadoran border.

Also on the same day, the FUR charged that Honduran colonels Gustavo Alvarez, Leonidas Torres and [name indistinct] went to the United States to work out the details.

As an exercise in preparation for all of this, Salvadoran troops penetrated into Honduras in July and from there, with support from the Tegucigalpa regime, undertook antiguerilla offensives against the FMLN positions in El Salvador's Chalatenango, Cabanas and Morazan departments.

These joint Salvadoran and Honduran military maneuvers failed, just as every offensive launched by the Salvadoran regime against the guerrilla bulwarks of Guasapa, Conchagua, Chinchontepic, Chalatenango, Moraza and many other regions of the country have failed.

Honduras has borders with Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua and this strategic position has given it a preferential place in the aggressive U.S. plans against the revolutionary movement in Central America.

Washington will initially try to drown the Salvadoran people's desire for freedom in blood and then will attempt to do the same in Guatemala; next, it will try to squelch the emergence of the guerrilla struggle in Honduras and to subvert the revolutionary order in Nicaragua. It has been said that these large-scale military operations, the next dangerous step in the U.S. intervention in El Salvador, will begin this month and that, in an effort to deceive the people, it will be labeled the Eagle VIII maneuvers, sponsored by the Central American Defense Council.

The revolutionaries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua will certainly know how to resist and to overcome the conspiracy being plotted in Honduras against them. It is urgent that all of the progressive forces of our America and the world mobilize to prevent the achievement of the U.S. imperialist goals.

CSO: 3010/1754

LIBYAN-UNITED STATES INCIDENT REPORTED

Mora Herman on Incident

FL220138 Havana Domestic Television Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 22 Aug 81

[Commentary by Carlos Mora Herman]

[Text] Last Wednesday's incident in the Gulf of Sidra, off the coast of Libya, in which two Libyan military aircraft were downed by U.S. combat aircraft, is an event which threatens peace and at the same time confirms the provocative and aggressive policy of the current Washington administration. The government of President Ronald Reagan this year began a destabilization campaign against the Libyan Government headed by Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

On 9 October 1973, the Libyan Government announced to all states and international organizations its right over the ancient Gulf of Sirte, known today as Gulf of Sidra, off the coast of Libya. At the same time, it fixed its maritime sovereignty over 200 miles from its coast. Washington does not recognize that sovereignty and since 1977 has conducted eight naval and air maneuvers in that area. In order to reinforce its plans against Libya, the United States has finalized an alliance with Tunisia, Sudan and Egypt, increasing military aid to those countries as well as selling spy planes to Saudi Arabia.

A while back, the CIA hatched a plot to assassinate al-Qadhdhafi and change Libya's policy, which is considered to be opposed to U.S. interests in the Middle East. The order to conduct these maneuvers in the Gulf of Sidra was given by President Reagan personally who, upon learning about the incident, said that he had done it to impress the Libyans.

This incident is considered to be a threat against oil-exporting countries and a demonstration that the United States has made international terrorism and violence its official policy. United States Secretary of State Alexander Haig confessed that his country had anticipated this incident. The daily NEW YORK TIMES revealed that the whole thing had been deliberate. Even two U.S. senators, one a Democrat and another a Republican, said they were convinced that the Sixth Fleet had been sent to the Gulf of Sidra to provoke an incident.

Secretary of State Haig himself acknowledged that the decision to conduct the maneuvers off the coast of Libya was political, and the expert in African affairs of that department, Chester Crocker, went further than that when he told a reporter of the WALL STREET JOURNAL that Washington is doing everything necessary to eliminate Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi.

The events in the Gulf of Sidra bring to mind the incident in the Gulf of Tonkin which was provoked by the yankees and which marked the beginning of the U.S. aggressive escalation against Vietnam. In condemning this aggression against Libya, the Ethiopian Government stated that the United States has no reason or right to conduct war maneuvers in the Gulf of Sidra, which is under Libyan sovereignty. All this, as the U.S. daily CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR says, reveals Washington's harder and more aggressive posture in the world. The U.S. bellicose activity throughout the planet is aimed at installing the law of the jungle and a cowboy style of Hollywood films in international relations. For this reason, it is necessary to express solidarity with the Libyan people in the face of these hostile and intimidating acts of the United States.

As the declaration issued by the Cuban Foreign Ministry states, world public opinion must be alerted on the grave consequences that these acts of the U.S. Government could provoke in the world.

U.S. Middle East Policy Scored

PA260446 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 26 Aug 81

["World Events" Commentary]

[Text] In a recent interview with this radio station, Elena Gil, president of the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of Peoples, affirmed that the final goal of the aggressive policy put into effect by Washington is to lead the world toward nuclear catastrophe with the vain hope that in an atomic conflict, capitalism will emerge the victor.

Steps such as the manufacture of the neutron bomb and the agreement to install new medium-range missiles in Europe demonstrate the validity of this theory.

Obviously, the United States is doing everything possible to aggravate international situation, provoke the unchaining of the war spiral and abort the liberation hopes of nations.

In the opinion of Pentagon strategists, one of the hot spots is the Middle East, where Ronald Reagan maintains the Camp David card in play. His predecessor in the White House put this card on the table in vicious alliance with the Egyptian regime and the Zionist state.

United States policy not only assures the existence of Israel as imperialist beachhead in the region but also welds the Zionists and traitors into a single front with the common goal of massacring the Palestinian people and weakening the progressive Arab nations.

A clear example of these designs is Washington's decision to send Tel Aviv a new shipment of F-15 fighter bombers after lifting the pharisaic embargo ordered by the U.S. State Department against Israel due to the use of similar equipment in the destruction of the Tamuz Iraqi nuclear center and the attacks on Beirut and the Palestine refugees camps in Lebanon.

Simultaneously, Washington is orchestrating the creation of a mixed military force, with U.S. numerical supremacy, to patrol the Sinai Peninsula under the pretext of maintaining peace according to the Camp David agreements.

To make up these troops, the United States obtained the efficient reply of Colombia and Uruguay, two of its Latin American alter boys, who agreed to send troops to that portion of Egyptian territory occupied by Tel Aviv since 1967.

This year Camp David has cost the Arab nations 1,679 dead and more than 5,200 wounded, and, according to the actions of its mentors, the price is still not high enough.

A few days ago Washington radio quoted the statements of a spokesman of the U.S. Department of Defense who, in commenting on the White House's decision to manufacture the neutron bomb, said that this weapon has not been conceived for its exclusive use in the possible battlefields of Europe. With appalling cynicism, the person being interviewed explained that, because of its placement on light missiles, the neutron weapon can be used in other areas of conflict on the planet such as the Middle East and Southern Africa.

We could then ask if the feverish minds that manufacture Washington's foreign policy are already contemplating the delivery of such a beastly device to Israel and South Africa, reactionary bulwarks in both geographic points? Occasionally, Washington has directed lukewarm public scoldings at them, while, behind the people's back it offers them thunderous applause and broad smiles accompanied by the most sophisticated and deadly weapons so that they may continue their aggressive and expansionist work.

Libyan F-14 Communique

PA201804 Havana International Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 20 Aug 81

[Text] The Libyan Foreign Ministry has issued a communique stating that the maneuvers of the 6th U.S. Fleet in the Gulf of Sidra are being carried out in waters that are under the jurisdiction of this Arab country and in the precise training area of their air force.

The communique was issued in relation to Wednesday's events when eight U.S. F-14 planes shot down two Libyan planes that were on a reconnaissance flight in the airspace over the Gulf of Sidra.

The statement from the Foreign Ministry underscores that these maneuvers violate Libyan sovereignty, endanger world peace and security, and violate the international rights recognized by the United Nations.

Toward the end of the communique, Libya said that it reserves the right to take the measures it considers necessary for the defense of its territory and jurisdictional waters.

U.S. 'Provocation' Scored

FL211140 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1100 GMT 21 Aug 81

[Text] The Ministry of Foreign Relations [MINREX] has issued a statement saying that a serious incident occurred in the Gulf of Sidra on Wednesday in which U.S. airplanes downed Libyan planes 60 miles off the coast of Libya, in an area which the government has declared part of its territorial sea.

The statement adds that this incident cannot be analyzed without taking into account that there have been hostile statements and actions in recent months on the part of U.S. official circles against the government of Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi, describing him as a terrorist, expelling Libyan diplomatic personnel from the United States and withdrawing U.S. personnel from Tripoli, and urging subversion against the legitimate Libyan Government.

The MINREX note goes on to say that the presence of a U.S. naval force in the Gulf of Sidra is an act of provocation designed to intimidate the Libyan Government and encourage the area's reactionary forces in plans of aggression against this Arab country because of its unfailing support of the anticolonialist and antineocolonialist struggles, the rights of the Palestinian people and the Middle East situation.

Lastly, the MINREX expresses the solidarity of the Cuban people and government with the Libyan people and government in face of these actions of hostility and intimidation. It alerts world opinion to the grave consequences of these actions by the government of Ronald Reagan.

Arab Union Scores Attack

PA230248 Havana International Service in Spanish 1800 GMT 22 Aug 81

[Text] In Havana, the Arab Union of Cuba condemned the U.S. attack against the Libyan planes and charged that the Egyptian, Sudanese, Israeli and other governments have plotted with the CIA to overthrow Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi because his revolutionary position affects yankee interests in the Middle East.

Arab Note to Fidel

FL251031 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 25 Aug 81

[Text] The International Secretariat of Solidarity With the Arab Nation has sent a message to Commander in Chief Fidel Castro in his capacity as chairman of the nonaligned countries movement in which it protests and requests some action from that organization because of the U.S. aggression against Libya.

The message states that the provocative maneuvers undertaken by the United States in Libyan jurisdictional waters are part of the current plots against the Libyan people and are conducive to consequences extremely dangerous. Large numbers of Egyptian troops are deployed on the Libyan border and U.S. aircraft have already attacked Libyan aircraft, the message sent to Fidel by the chairman of the International Secretariat of Solidarity With the Arab Nation, (Omar el-Sandhi), stresses.

AALAPSO Solidarity With Libya

FL272151 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2130 GMT 27 Aug 81

[Text] The Executive Secretariat of the Afro-Asian-Latin American People's Solidarity Organization [AALAPSO] has sent a message to Libyan leader Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi on the commemoration on 1 September of another anniversary of the triumph of the revolution in Libya.

Its successes in political, economic and social development and the firm anti-imperialist position upheld by the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya are a blow to the aspirations of the yankees, Zionism and their lackeys to impose their domination over the area, the message stresses. It also condemns the maneuvers and threats of the Ronald Reagan administration and the plans of aggression perpetrated against al-Qadhdhafi and his people.

AALAPSO reiterates its militant solidarity with the just cause of this Arab nation and its certainty that Libya will go on to greater success.

CSO: 3010/1753

PUERTO RICAN ISSUE AT UNITED NATIONS

Discussion Proposed

FL191128 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 19 Aug 81

[Text] Cuba and Syria have presented to the special UN decolonization committee a draft resolution calling for the UN General Assembly to include the case of colonial Puerto Rico on its agenda for the next period of sessions.

The Cuban-Syrian proposal was presented to the meeting on Tuesday by Raul Roa, Cuban ambassador to the United Nations, who was one of the many persons to appear before the special decolonization committee in conjunction with its present discussion of the case of colonial Puerto Rico.

The draft proposal urges the U.S. Government to take all the necessary steps to completely transfer power to the Puerto Rican people.

Juan Mari Bras, secretary general of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party who also addressed the committee yesterday, emphasized that the most diverse political sectors of Puerto Rico agree that the issue should be included on the agenda of the 37th General Assembly.

Many other representatives of different countries and political groups also appeared before the committee on Tuesday to support the cause of independence for the Puerto Rican people, including many U.S. lawyers and political figures and Eloy Torres, vice president of the Venezuelan Chamber of Representatives.

Results Applauded

FL211210 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 21 Aug 81

[Text] The United States suffered a catastrophic defeat in the United Nations when the UN special decolonization committee decided by majority to approve a draft resolution presented by Cuba, Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq that places Puerto Rico within the group of colonies and requests that the general assembly include the case of colonial Puerto Rico on its agenda for discussion.

The bill proposed by Cuba and three other countries was approved with the following vote count: 11 in favor, 2 against and 11 abstentions. This was the first time that the committee has asked to have the general assembly discuss the problem as a separate issue.

The victory of the anticolonialist forces was even greater in view of the fact that the United States turned to active pressure and negotiations to have the proposal rejected.

Acting on behalf of the United States were Venezuela and Australia. Australia and Denmark were the only countries that voted against the proposal.

Charles Lichenstein, alternate U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, spoke with bravado after the voting, saying that Washington will never permit the topic to be discussed by the UN General Assembly.

For his part, Juan Mari Bras, secretary general of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, said that the committee's decision constitutes a first important diplomatic defeat of the Ronald Reagan government. He noted that only 3 of the committee's 25 members opposed having the topic transferred to the general assembly; that is, a tiny minority.

In the case of Venezuela, Mari Bras said it is known with certainty that the U.S. Government threatened the Herrera Campins government with refusing to sell it military planes if it voted in favor of the independence of Puerto Rico.

Roa Kouri Remarks

PA221550 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 22 Aug 81

[Statement by Raul Roa Kouri, Cuban permanent ambassador to the United Nations, to newsmen in New York; no date given--recorded]

[Excerpts] The resolution approved by the UN special committee for decolonization recommending that the UN General Assembly examine the Puerto Rican issue as a separate case during the ordinary period of sessions, was approved by 11 votes to 2; the other members of the committee abstained. The resolution this year has great importance, precisely because the Venezuelan delegation requested that each paragraph of the resolution be considered separately. The result was interesting and significative. The first paragraph deals with the Puerto Rican people's rights to self-determination and to independence, according to Resolution 1514 approved at the 15th UN General Assembly. This resolution contains the declaration on the concession of independence of countries and colonies. A total of 14 countries which are members of the committee voted in favor of including this paragraph in the resolution. This means that a greater number of the committee's member countries have supported this point of the resolution. As you may recall, last year, the resolution had 12 votes in favor. This means that there are more than 12 member countries of the committee firmly in support of this principle that Cuba has maintained as unequivocal example of our historic support for Jose Marti's position. Marti, the creator and founder of our independence, said that with the freedom of Cuba and Puerto Rico, he wanted to prevent the United States from [words indistinct] over the nations of our America.

Further on, paragraph 6 of the resolution requests that the committee continue to examine the case of Puerto Rico. A total of 16 countries voted in favor of including this paragraph in the resolution. This means that the majority of the

committee's members recognize the colonial nature of the case of Puerto Rico. This has been denounced at the UN and at other forums by the representatives of the Cuban Revolutionary Government.

Venezuela's requests for separate consideration of the paragraph of the expository part of the resolution, showed the interests of the Venezuelan Government in clarifying its position against the committee's recommendation to have the UN General Assembly include the colonial case of Puerto Rico on its agenda for the UN 36th period of sessions. Evidently, the Venezuelan position bows to certain pressures exerted on many committee members. We must admit, however, that the countries which still support this resolution have not submitted to any of the well-known pressures that the U.S. Government has exerted recently and through the years to prevent the case of Puerto Rico from being discussed.

It is clear that the imperialist U.S. Government is extremely annoyed at having the case of Puerto Rico submitted to the UN General Assembly. The U.S. Government has always denied the colonial nature of the Puerto Rican case and has also denied the jurisdiction of the special committee for decolonization in the issue. The fact that the committee now recommends that the case of Puerto Rico be submitted to the UN General Assembly is a real defeat of the positions the U.S. Government has held.

It is clear that those who often act more as servants than as friends of yankee imperialist interests are trying to (?help) them in order to keep the UN General Assembly from reviewing the case.

CSO: 3010/1752

REPORTAGE ON AALAPSO ACTIVITIES

Meeting With OCLAE

FL141530 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1420 GMT 14 Aug 81

[Text] Members of the Standing Secretariat of the Continental Organization of Latin American Students [OCLAE] and representatives of the Afro-Asian-Latin American People's Solidarity Organization [AALAPSO] have met in this capital on the occasion of the 25th OCLAE anniversary. During the meeting a message was delivered which states that there has been no struggle of the Latin American and Caribbean peoples in which the student movement and OCLAE's solidarity have not been present alongside the working class, peasantry and other social sectors.

The document adds that the OCLAE has developed numerous activities and initiatives since its founding. The AALAPSO representatives and the OCLAE Standing Secretariat expressed the need for strengthening increasingly more the ties between the two institutions.

Meets Syrian Charge

FL181647 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 18 Aug 81

[Text] The Executive Secretariat of the Afro-Asian-Latin American People's Solidarity Organization [AALAPSO] and the workers at the organization's headquarters have bid farewell to (Nader Nader), charge d'affaires at the Syrian Embassy in Cuba and Syria's representative to AALAPSO.

Melba Hernandez, AALAPSO secretary general, emphasized that the senior member of the Executive Secretariat, who is concluding his mission in Havana, earned the affection and respect of Cubans.

For his part (Nader Nader) mentioned many of the activities in which he participated during the 5 years he spent in Cuba, noted the significance of the fact that his last activity should be to speak on behalf of AALAPSO at the ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Sandinist National Liberation Front in Nicaragua.

Statement on Namibia

FL251455 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1400 GMT 25 Aug 81

[Text] The Executive Secretariat of the Afro-Asian-Latin American People's Solidarity Organization [AALAPSO], has called on revolutionary, progressive and democratic organizations to stop imperialist actions that seek to thwart the independence of Namibia.

In a statement issued here in Havana, the organization states that, 15 years after armed struggle began in Namibia, its people, under the leadership of the South-West African People's Organization [SWAPO], are waging a determined battle to win their freedom.

The South African Government, with the support of the United States and other Western powers, is brutally repressing the movement for the liberation of Namibia, the declaration adds. It also maintains that U.S. imperialism and its gendarme, South Africa, through underhanded maneuvers, are trying to remove the so-called Namibia case from within the framework of the United Nations in order that, without the pressure of the international community, they may seek neocolonialist solutions that will safeguard their interests.

The AALAPSO Executive Secretariat calls on world public opinion to take measures to fulfill the international community's demand for effective sanctions against apartheid.

CSO: 3010/1757

BRIEFS

AGGRESSION AGAINST ANGOLA--Cuba has denounced a mobilization of South African troops in preparation for an attack against Angola as well as the support being given by Washington to the aggressive policy of the Pretoria racist regime. In a speech at a meeting of the UN decolonization special committee, which is discussing the Namibia problem, Cuban delegate Miguel Alvarez mentioned the repeated attacks perpetrated by South African troops against Namibian refugee camps in Angola. In addition, he stated that in recent months there has been a broad military movement with the concentration of 40,000 troops on the border for the purpose of conducting new aggressions against the Angolan population and provoking a large-scale conventional war in that part of Africa. In this respect, the Cuban delegate noted the evident economic, political and military support being given by Western superpowers to South Africa, stressing that of Washington which has been intensified by the present Reagan administration. [Text] [FL121041 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 12 Aug 81]

MOVES HINDERING INDEPENDENCE--Cuba has denounced activities by foreign economic and military interests which hinder independence of colonial territories, it has been announced by UN headquarters. Cuban delegate to the UN decolonization special committee Alfredo Garcia Almeida said during a debate on the topic that a direct consequence of the activities of foreign interests is the prolongation of the colonial status. After referring to military activities, Garcia Almeida cited the example of Namibia, which has been transformed into one of the potential centers of international confrontation by South Africa and its Western partners. [Text] [FL131234 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1100 GMT 13 Aug 81]

DEPARTING ENVOYS RECEIVED—Rene Rodriguez, member of the PCC Central Committee and president of the Cuban Institute for Friendship With Peoples [ICAP], has received at the ICAP headquarters Mongolian ambassador to Cuba Ochiryn Tsend, who will soon conclude his mission to our country. In the morning hours, Rene Rodriguez received at the ICAP headquarters His Excellency Mr Manuel Sanchez Ortiz, Spanish ambassador to Cuba, who paid a farewell visit. The talks were held in a cordial and friendly atmosphere in accordance with the relations existing between the two countries. [Text] [FL141713 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 14 Aug 81]

JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP DELEGATION--Raul Roa, member of the PCC Central Committee and acting president of the People's Government National Assembly, yesterday met with the delegation of the Japan-Cuba Parliamentary Friendship League, headed by deputy (Hiroshi Mitsusuka). The talks were held in a cordial atmosphere and dealt with bilateral relations between the two institutions. The current [municipal] electoral process was one of the topics taken up during the talks. The Japanese parliament members were briefed on our system of elections of representatives to the people's government at all levels. Present in the talks were Jose Aranaburu, secretary of the national assembly; Luis Mendez Morejon, president of the Cuban counterpart organization; and officials of the national assembly. The Japanese delegation also met with Jose R. Viera, minister of foreign relations ad interim, with whom the delegation members exchanged views on the international situation and on bilateral relations between Cuba and Japan. In addition, the members of the Japanese delegation visited the Central Planning Board, where they were received by its first vice president, Miguel A. Figueras, who explained the outlook for the economic and social development plans of the current 5-year period. [Text] [FL141659 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 14 Aug 81]

ISRAELI EMBARGO--The White House has announced the lifting of the embargo that it had imposed on the delivery of 16 modern F-15 and F-16 fighter planes to Israel. The shipment of 14 F-16 and 2 F-15 planes to the Tel Aviv regime was suspended after 7 June, when Israel bombed an Iraqi nuclear reactor with U.S.-made weapons, an act that was widely condemned internationally. The present U.S. administration refused to condemn Israel for this bombing and the decision to deliver the planes confirms the belief that the embargo was just a public gesture on Washington's part. [Excerpt] [FL181152 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1045 GMT 18 Aug 81]

SABOTAGING INFORMATION ORDER--United Nations--Cuba has denounced U.S. attempts to sabotage the work of the United Nations, especially of UNESCO, toward the creation of a new international information order. Addressing the information committee, Cuban delegate Enrique Gonzalez Manet said that the United Nations risks seeing its efforts thwarted. He called for unified support of the agreements already arrived at concerning the new order and an international communications development program. Gonzalez Manet hailed the consensus reached on a document of recommendations from the committee to the general assembly which, he said, affect more than 100 underdeveloped nations. He warned, however, about the aggression arranged by the multinational centers of power directed against UNESCO and, behind it, against the new international information order of its main sponsors, the nonaligned countries. [Text] [FL272228 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2130 GMT 27 Aug 81]

U.S. ENVOY TO GUATEMALA--The new yankee ambassador in Guatemala, Frederic Chapin, has arrived in the Central American nation to present his credentials to tyrant Romeo Lucas whose regime averages at least 30 murders a day. Chapin was chosen by the White House to replace U.S. ambassador to El Salvador, Robert White, when the latter criticized increased military aid to the genocidal junta. It was up to the now ambassador to Guatemala to coordinate the arrival in El Salvador of U.S. airplanes, helicopters, tanks, bombs and napalm along with yankee advisers. It has been reported that the fundamental mission of the new head of the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala is to do exactly the same in Guatemala as he did in El Salvador. [Text] [FL221330 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 22 Aug 81]

PCC ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION--Jorge Valdes, second secretary of the PCC Political Committee and president of the Electoral Commission in Havana City Province, has indicated that the achievement this year of record participation by electors in the nomination assemblies is an event of particular political importance. He emphasized that this participation reflects the firm support given by the residents of the capital province to their revolution. [Text] [FL201450 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1400 GMT 20 Aug 81]

JUDICIAL DELEGATION IN GDR--A delegation of the Supreme People's Tribunal headed by its president, Jose [as heard] Amaro Salup, has arrived in the GDR. The Cuban delegation was received by GDR Justice Minister Hans Joachim Heusinger and deputy general prosecuting attorney Guenter Wendland. [FL140049 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2004 GMT 13 Aug 81 FL]

NOMINATION PROCESS PROGRESS--Six provinces have concluded the process to nominate municipal delegate candidates: Granma, Guantanamo, Las Tunas, Ciego de Avila, Matanzas and Havana. The National Electoral Commission also reported that 131 municipalities throughout the country have concluded the nomination process with the participation of 4,914,513 citizens. [Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 19 Aug 81 FL]

TRIBUTE TO O'HIGGINS--The Cuban Institute of Friendship With Peoples [ICAP] has hosted a cultural ceremony at ICAP headquarters to mark the 203d anniversary of the birth of Chilean forefather Bernardo O'Higgins. Featured speaker at the activity was Roberto Contreras Lobos, a member of the Chilean Committee of Solidarity With the Antifascist Resistance, who spoke in glowing terms about the Chilean patriot. [FL211537 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1400 GMT 21 Aug 81 FL]

SOLIDARITY WITH BOLIVIAN STUDENTS--The Federation of University Students [FEU] has sent a message to the Bolivian University Confederation [CUB] as part of the drive of solidarity with the people and students of Bolivia. The document says that Cuban students express their firm and militant solidarity with the just struggle of the people against the murderous military dictatorship. Through a bloody coup d'etat, this military dictatorship has snatched away the electoral triumph of the forces of the left. The FEU denounces the assassinations and outrages committed by the hired assassins of the regime against the combative Bolivian students and demands respect for the autonomy and normal functioning of the militarily-occupied universities. [Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1421 GMT 21 Aug 81 FL]

TRIBUTE TO BORDER GUARDS--The banner of a socialist emulation initiating unit in the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR] has been given to the glorious border brigade by Div Gen Sixto Batista, alternate member of the PCC Politburo and chief of the FAR Central Political Directorate. The unit earned the prize for

having satisfactorily met all its commitments. The ceremony was held at one of the border brigade posts a few meters from the Cuban territory that is illegally occupied by the U.S. Government. The document granting the honor to the border guards, which was issued by Gen of the Army Raul Castro, minister of the FAR, congratulates the guards on their achievements in political and military preparation. [FL241153 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1045 GMT 24 Aug 81 FL]

TRIBUTE TO FAR VANGUARDS--A week of tribute to the chiefs and officers who have been vanguards of the FAR in the 1980-1981 instruction year begins today. Those honored will visit military, economic and historical centers and other sites of interest and will be tributed during fraternal meetings with political and mass organizations. [Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1045 GMT 24 Aug 81 FL]

ANIR CONGRESS--The National Association of Innovators and Efficiency Experts [ANIR] is to hold its first congress on 8-9 December. [FL280133 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1807 GMT 27 Aug 81 FL]

INDER OFFICIALS' ACTIVITIES--Representatives of the CDR's Sports Organizations and Cuba's National Institute for Sports, Physical Education and Recreation [INDER] began talks today in Berlin concerning the 1981 plan and the 1982 exchange programs. The talks are headed by the GDR's Franz Rydz and Cuba's Reinaldo Gonzalez. INDER President Carlos Galvan Vila is scheduled to arrive in Berlin tonight from Tripoli. At the conclusion of the talks on Sunday, Galvan Vila and INDER official Ciro Perez will go on to Bucharest to take part in the meeting of socialist sports ministers. [Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2008 GMT 27 Aug 81 FL]

PORt IMPROVEMENT NEEDED--Guillermo Garcia Frias, member of the Politburo and minister of transportation, has said at a meeting to evaluate the port-transportation-domestic economy network in Havana that the port of Havana must be made the most efficient in the country. The meeting was also attended by Politburo member Jorge Risquet. Guillermo Garcia referred to the economic importance of the port of Havana, considering the high levels of goods handled on their way in and out of the country, and therefore it must function at its very best so that it may come up to the level of the extraordinary work accomplished in the country's other ports. Analyzing the effects of delays versus prompt dispatching--which were, on balance, positive in the first 15 days of August--the minister of transportation stressed that this is fatal to the country's economy as is the length of time railroad cars and trucks are standing idle, because all these factors conspire against the circulation of merchandise. [sentence as heard] After dwelling on the need to eradicate delays in loading and unloading and improve organization and coordination 100 percent, Guillermo Garcia emphasized that when we all do our duty, the country's economy will benefit. [Text] [FL221353 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 22 Aug 81]

ASSEMBLY DEPUTIES NOMINATED--Jose Aranaburo, secretary [as heard] of the National Electoral Commission, said that the process of nomination of candidates for deputy to the municipal assemblies of the people's government has been successfully completed and aug- met yesterday with membe- well for successful elections on 11 October. Aranaburo of the electoral commissions of Pinar Del Rio and Matanzas provinces, whic ad the highest percentages of participation in the nomination meetings: 93. and 93.6 percent, respectively. The leader noted that there had been an 86-percent attendance rate overall in the country during the nomination period, which began on 1 August. He said that such a rate had never before been achieved. Aranaburo said that the recent meetings were attended by over 700,000 more people than participated in the elections of February 1979 and by 1 million more than in 1976. Jose Aranaburo noted the efforts made in Havana, which resulted in the participation of over 1.12 million electors in the nomination meetings. The total national attendance at the 26,856 meetings, was over 5.5 million electors or 86 percent, the highest rate achieved so far. [Text] [FL211114 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 21 Aug 81]

U.S. MANEUVERS' THREAT--From the El Picote observation post near the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo, dozens of U.S. reporters and other foreign correspondents in Cuba watched the United States' warlike exercises in the Caribbean. These exercises are part of Ocean Venture 81, the largest naval maneuvers since World War II. Lt Col Angel Rodriguez, chief of the press, radio and television section of the Cuban Ministry of Revolutionary Armed Forces told the foreign reporters that those maneuvers underway in Cuba are part of the U.S. policy to increase international tensions and to threaten those countries of Central America and the Caribbean who have freed themselves from the imperialist domination. We have not taken special measures in view of these maneuvers, Lt Col Angel Rodriguez said, because our people are permanently on guard and ready to defend their revolution. [Excerpts] [PA200356 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 19 Aug 81]

NICARAGUANS OBSERVE CENSUS PREPARATIONS--Nicaraguans from the Sociodemographic Research Directorate of that brother country visited the provincial census office in Havana, where they were received by Trinidad Mondejar, territorial delegate of the State Statistics Committee in the capital, and Jose Luis Morales, chief of the census office. Comrade Trinidad Mondejar explained to the visitors the organizational work that has been done in this province, from the preliminary registration of the population in October 1980 to the system we use today, such as the division of the capital into 14,099 sectors [segmentos], 3,332 districts and 217 census areas, thus making it possible to take the census in a timely and proper manner. Mondejar discussed the steps taken to establish a quality cartographic base and the period in which seminars were given to all the personnel involved in this statistical activity, which is of great economic importance. The Nicaraguan visitors displayed interest in all the tasks involved in organizing and publicizing the census, in view of the fact that they will be taking a census in their country next year. The delegation from the brother country of Sandino will also visit the municipalities of Playa and Diez de Octubre in the capital province, as well as the provincial offices in Villa Clara, Sancti Spiritus and Cienfuegos to acquire experience that will be useful to them for the population census scheduled to be taken in Nicaragua next year. [Armilda Caballero] [Text] [FL191604 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1400 GMT 19 Aug 81]

VENEZUELAN DISIP AID--Explosives supplied by Venezuela's Political Police Force [DISIP] were used to blow up a Cuban commercial aircraft while on flight near Barbados on 6 October 1976, a savage act in which 73 passengers were killed. This was revealed to the DIARIO DE CARACAS daily by Cuban counterrevolutionary Orlando Garcia, who was at the time an official of the Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services [DISIP], the political police of Venezuela's Interior Ministry. According to Garcia, the explosives were prepared by a DISIP technician whose name was Fabres, who delivered them to the directly responsible perpetrators of the brutal crime, Cuban counterrevolutionaries Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada Carriles and Venezuelan terrorists Freddy Lugo and Hernan Ricardo. Posada Carriles also was an official of the DISIP and acted as organizer of terrorist groups which perpetrated numerous attacks and crimes against Cuban consulates and embassies in Latin America. According to the DIARIO DE CARACAS, the then DISIP official Orlando Garcia is currently a bodyguard of former Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez. Garcia said the Argentine terrorist organization "Triple A" also cooperated with counterrevolutionary Posada Carriles in the perpetration of attacks and crimes against Cuban diplomats and diplomatic missions. [Text] [FL271031 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 27 Aug 81]

MAIDANA TORTURED--Antonio Maidana, first secretary of the Communist Party of Paraguay, and labor leader Emilio Roa are suffering savage torture and are kept hooded night and day so they will not be recognized by the other political prisoners in the dungeons of the Emboscada prison, some 40 km from the capital, Asuncion. This was reported in a press conference at Cuban Institute of Friendship With Peoples [ICAP] headquarters by Rogelio Gonzalez, representative in Cuba of the Communist Party of Paraguay. Gonzalez noted that 1 year after the kidnapping of the two leaders, the wave of protest and indignation has grown all over the world. He added that the disappearance of Maidana and Emilio Roa in Buenos Aires in broad daylight was the result of operation Condor, a secret agreement among the reactionary regimes of the southern cone organized by the CIA for the assassination and arrest of exiled opposition politicians. Gonzalez charged that neither the Argentine or the Paraguayan governments, both of which plotted the action, has responded to the worldwide outcry caused by that criminal action which violates all rights. Also present at the press conference were Luis Miguel Morejon, ICAP director for Latin America and the Caribbean, and newsmen from the various press media in our country. [Text] [FL280052 Havana Domestic Television Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 28 Aug 81]

CSO: 3010/1754

BRIEFS

AGREEMENTS TO CONGRESS--President Antonio Guzman has submitted to congress for approval several cooperation agreements signed by the Dominican Republic with friendly governments. Included in the package is the agreement signed on 30 June of this year between the Dominican Government and the U.S. Government through the agency for international development. This agreement deals with a project whose main goal is the improvement of the country's earnings and quality of life through an increase in agricultural production and rural development. It also includes an agreement signed by the Dominican Central Bank and Spain's official credit institute. The agreement signed by the Spanish Government establishes a line of credit with the Spanish state in favor of our country in the amount of 5.33 million pesos. This financing will [be] paid off by the Dominican Republic in 14 years with a 3-year grace period and a 5.5 percent annual interest. The government has submitted to the consideration of congress an agreement signed by the Dominican Republic and the FRG governing the participation of professional technicians of the German cooperation system in some of the country's development projects. In addition, there is another project signed by the country and the IDB by virtue of which that banking institute grants the Dominican Republic a loan of up to 7.2 million dollars. President Antonio Guzman also submitted to congress another agreement signed by the Dominican Republic and the IDB providing cooperation in financing the cost of a program for the technical strengthening of the education secretariat. In addition, this agreement will provide the means for training teaching personnel of the state's education system. [Excerpt] [FL261331 Santo Domingo Radio Mil Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 26 Aug 81]

CSO: 3010/1759

FATE OF 'OTHER' POLITICAL EXILES QUESTIONED

Letter to the Editor

Port au Prince LE PETIT SAMEDI SOIR in French 8-21 Aug 81 p 6

[Text] To the Editor: I have just read Issue No 394 of LE PETIT SAMEDI SOIR and in particular the piece of Myrtho on the exiled journalists. I note with satisfaction that LE PETIT SAMEDI SOIR is regaining a bit of its old spirit and is no longer afraid to speak about the country's problems.

But to read the article, one would think only journalists were in exile. It gave no news about anyone but them. It only argued their brief, and pled their cause. This tendency in fact largely ignores the position of all those who raised their voices after the unhappy events of 28 November 1980. Both Aubelin Jolicoeur and other as well.

Nevertheless, before 28 November, there were exiles--honest and capable citizens exiled in conditions equally deplorable. One need only cite the case of Dr Franck Joseph, deported almost exactly 2 years ago. In the ranks of the 28 November group, one could also mention Jean Jacques Honorat, the agronomist and economist, Gregorie Eugene, the jurist and party leader, among others. Not to forget those who are still in prison, in Haiti.

We are certain that you will not fail to raise your voice on behalf of all of them. I do not here plead "not guilty" on their behalf. I urge them to return to their own country. So that, whether they are guilty or not, they may have the chance to be judged and to defend themselves for the first time. And, if they are guilty, to be convicted. This, Mr Editor, is elementary in democracy. I do not underestimate the value of your journal. I only say that you have been too tepid lately in defending endangered democracy.

In the name of the fatherland, I extend my cordial salutations.

I am signing this letter, but request anonymity for reasons that you will readily understand. [Signed] Professor at the University of Haiti.

Response by Newspaper

Port au Prince LE PETIT SAMEDI SOIR in French 8-21 Aug 81 p 7

[Text] The letter from the professor at the University of Haiti published in our letters to the editor section is very typical of a certain mind-set. The professor has noble sentiments. He wants "the greatest good for the greatest number." He preaches liberty and democracy, but does not want to take any risks "for understandable reasons." A university professor, doubtless also an employee of the state, allied to the political class, still holding on to the ideas of the 1960's, he thinks that he should not make open statements of political opinion, should not get his hands "dirty." Behind his secure fortifications, the professor climbs up on his pedestal and magisterially delivers his lecture. He finds the PSS too tepid in the face of the threat to democracy. He reproaches it for not having taken up the cause of the others. And to top it all, the professor demands anonymity. We would have simply ignored a letter of this kind, if it did not provide us the opportunity to make several considered observations. Meanwhile, here is an answer for the professor.

Before and after 28 November, people from Haiti's professional classes were expelled from the country. The newspapers reported it. In many cases, these individuals belonged to national professional associations (medicine, agronomy, law). And this always surprised us. Not a whiff of protest or request for information. Does this mean that team spirit and "esprit de corps" no longer exist here? Have we come to the point where, like the university professor, no one wants to take risks, except the journalists?

Journalism is a difficult field. Journalists are not heroes, but human beings like anyone else, with a sense of vocation that obliges them to take dangerous risks. And often, in order to dig more deeply, they need the help of the public they are defending. It is regrettable that the public in our country shows its solidarity by silence, anonymity, or "m'te oue sa pou yo" [Creole expression]. Those who have been exiled were working for the good of others. Not their own. They could have gone along with the stream, applauded, and made their way like anyone else; better, perhaps, than others, for it was their intelligence, their moral fiber, their humanism, which often led them to go against the grain and act as the spokesmen for the silent multitude. During these last 8 months, one might have expected some gesture on the part of those who were being defended by Marcus, Jean Dominique, Jean Robert Herard, Michelle Montas, G. Eugene, Pierre Clitandre, etc....

A respectful petition, signed by thousands of Haitian listeners and readers, asking for reconsideration of the expulsion decree by the government on 28 November would certainly have had more effect than any positions taken in isolation by Aubelin Jolicoeur and PSS.

But who would sign that petition? Who, for a good cause, will take the risk? As an enlightened and responsible citizen one has the right, with due respect for the law and authority, to express one's opinions on the affairs of the policy. But where are the responsible men and women who take their citizenship seriously?

We will soon find out, for the professor's letter has led us to try a new experiment. A petition, for example, to the chief of state to ask for clemency for the Haitian exiles on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Francois Duvalier's accession to power on 22 September 1957.

9516

CSO: 3100/918

PDCH CANDIDATE STATES PARTY VIEW ON ELECTIONS

San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA in Spanish 1 Aug 81 p 3

[Text] Tegucigalpa--Dr Hernan Corrales Padilla, presidential candidate of the Honduran Christian Democratic Party (PDCH), announced his party's position with regard to the present election campaign.

The Christian Democratic leader agreed with Ricardo Zuniga Augustinus, the Nationalist Party candidate, in that there is still time to bring the voting lists up to date as long as the objective is to provide free elections that would direct and convey the political will of the people.

Corrales Padilla stated that the future or political rejection of democracy that the people desire depends directly on the ability of the political parties and the government to provide a profoundly democratic content to the present election campaign. "This implies the widest possible participation in clean and free elections that will allow the majorities to participate in an organized and active way in the political and economic life of the nation," he added.

Corrales Padilla affirmed that his party does not oppose updating the voting registry because "there are abnormalities that could lead Hondurans into chaos; those who do not agree, for other reasons, are not aware of this or do not want peace in this country, which, under present circumstances, can only be free on the basis of dignity and clean elections."

He said that Honduras faces one of its last opportunities to continue with the democratic system, which by responding to the basic hopes and needs of the majority of the people will help them maintain credibility in the electoral process as a valid means of access to leadership.

Otherwise, he said, the only ones with responsibility are those who make the political decisions for the nation. The hopes of Hondurans rest with democracy; thus, an opportunity such as this must not be lost since the threats are constant and must be met by rising to the occasion, conscientiously, for the good of the nation.

In their speeches the PDCH leaders called for an end to administrative corruption, especially the use of government property for the benefit of certain political sectors, a traditional custom in Honduras.

9015

CSO: 3010/1636

PASTORA COMMENTS ON POLISARIO, REGIONAL ISSUES

Bogota EL SIGLO in Spanish 2 Aug 81 p 9

[Interview with Eden Pastora, "Commander Zero," by Spanish journalists in the Moroccan desert and Madrid; date not given]

[Text] (EFE)--Many different stories about the whereabouts of the Sandinist leader Eden Pastora, Commander Zero, have circulated as a result of his resigning his position in the revolutionary government of Nicaragua and his departure from the country. It was reported that Commander Zero might be in Colombia or in El Salvador. Latest news reports confirm that he is in Panama, where he met last week with former Venezuelan president, Carlos Andres Perez. For this reason we are publishing Pastora's most recent interview given to the Spanish press before he resigned his post in Nicaragua. The interview took place in Madrid, when Pastora was returning from having met with the POLISARIO guerrillas who are fighting in Morocco. He was accompanied thereby the Cuban ambassador to Angola and other leftist and communist leaders of the Third World. In these remarks Pastora declares that he is thinking of resigning his post in Nicaragua, which he did do later, and he expresses his solidarity with various subversive movements in Latin America. In one of the paragraphs of the report Commander Zero has the audacity to make the odd remark that Carlos Andres Perez is the most important Venezuelan of all time, except for Bolivar.

Eden Pastora, the popular Commander Zero of the Nicaraguan revolution, has been together with the POLISARIO during its celebration of the fifth anniversary of the creation of the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic. In the desert we had an opportunity to speak with Commander Zero at length. Later we were able to complete our interview at the airport in Madrid. The following is an extensive summary of the conversation held with Eden Pastora.

[Question] What are Commander Zero's plans as regards the POLISARIO, now that you have really been in contact with it?

[Answer] As soon as I arrive in Managua, I will write up a report for our national leadership so that we will be able to give aid to the Saharan people in the international political field. I think that these people have the right to live in peace, and to build their country freely and independently, without being invaded. We give moral and political support to all peoples who are fighting for liberty.

[Question] Will your support only be limited to the political sphere or will it extend to armed struggle?

[Answer] All we Sandinists are filled with revolutionary internationalism. If we happen to die in Nicaragua, we will die happy. If we should die in the Sahara, staining the sand of the Sahara with our blood, we will die happy... But in order for me to physically fight I would have to give up my responsibilities in the Nicaraguan Government, and lose my military rank as brigade commander; and then, like any other Nicaraguan, like any revolutionary, join the POLISARIO Front. And supposing I did this, in order to be able to fight in the desert I would first have to learn how to withstand those 60°C temperatures in the desert. Now I will have to think about whether a body accustomed to the temperature of the tropics can change its metabolism and withstand the high temperatures of the desert. And if it is possible, I will go off to the Sahara to fight with the Saharan brothers.

Desert Guerrilla War

[Question] Are we seeing the birth of a new Che Guevara, then?

[Answer] Not at all. I would like to resemble Che, even slightly. The fact is that all revolutionaries have many things in common, and one of the things we revolutionaries have in common is that those who are killed in the Sahara are the ones killed in El Salvador, are our dead.

[Question] What is your opinion of the POLISARIO guerrilla war?

[Answer] I can say that the best guerrilla fighter in Nicaragua would be the worst guerrilla fighter in the desert. Here the warfare is different. We need the forest and the jungle for our strategy. We would not be able to carry out an ambush if there were no forests. Here in the desert a different strategy is used. I cannot imagine how the POLISARIO guerrillas carry out ambushes in the desert and defeat their enemy. I am impressed with the way these people live and fight. When Commander Zero arrived in Madrid, en route to Managua, we took advantage of his stop-over to continue the dialogue.

[Question] Is this the first time you have been in Madrid?

[Answer] Not the first time. I have been in the Spanish capital clandestinely on other occasions.

Eden Pastora speaks of the Nicaraguan revolution. He says that "in the Nicaraguan revolution there were no executions or lynchings, by decree of our Sandinist revolution, which was relentless in the fighting and magnanimous afterward."

"However," continues Commander Zero, "there are some people who do not want our revolution to go down in history as a bloodless one, and who are provoking us. I refer to the mean and egotistical spirits of the counterrevolutionaries at home and abroad."

[Question] What happened to the Somozist officials at the end of the war?

[Answer] They returned to Nicaragua, including Bernardino Lario, who was minister of defense. When he returned he was offered an ambassadorial post in Brazil, and did not accept it. He was offered loans, and did not accept them. Later he began to conspire, until he was discovered, arrested and jailed. At present he is serving his sentence.

[Question] Let's talk about the situation in El Salvador. How does Nicaragua view the events in that country?

[Answer] We are morally behind the people of El Salvador. Everyone knows the horrible crimes that the Junta has committed. They have murdered priests, a bishop during the Holy Mass. All this because they had preached the Church of Christ of the poor and not of the rich. They have even murdered nuns, and are committing genocide. Because of this we are morally assisting the people who are fighting a war inside El Salvador.

Praise for Carlos Andres Perez

[Question] You speak of moral aid; however, the Sandinists have been accused of bringing arms into El Salvador, and it is even said that they are the same arms which Venezuela sent you.

[Answer] That is not true. When the people fight, the forces of reaction always looks for justification. They have arms, as we did, and as all liberation movements always do.

[Question] And how did you procure the arms at the beginning of your struggle?

[Answer] We purchased arms in Europe. We also bought them from the "gringos"; not from their government, but secretly in Miami. I would suppose that, just as we did then, the compañeros in El Salvador will do it. To say that we gave them the arms that we received from Venezuela is not true, because among other things, we need them for arming our own people.

Eden Pastora speaks of Carlos Andres Perez. He has words of praise for the former Venezuela president. He goes on to say that "only Bolivar is greater than Carlos Andres." According to Commander Zero, Carlos Andres was "the only one in Venezuela who raised his voice to point out the genocide that Somoza was committing in Nicaragua."

[Question] What do you have to say about the accusations which are being made that your government is close to Fidel Castro, and about the possibility of converting Nicaragua into a communist center?

[Answer] Those rumors, those fears arise from lack of understanding of Nicaraguan reality. Revolutions are neither imitated or exported, so therefore the case of a new Cuba can not reoccur.

[Question] How do you define yourself, and how would you define Sandinism?

[Answer] As for me, judge me by my answers and by my attitudes. If I say: I am this way, or I am not this way, you would begin to draw conclusions and begin to "confuse your left hand with your right," as the Spanish like to say. As for the Sandinist movement, I will say one thing, and that is that the Sandinist revolution is similar to Christianity. They both proclaim the giving up of material things, they both speak of love for ones neighbor and for moral values, and, if necessary, they both proclaim violence as violence was the death of Christ.

[Question] All that is very well. But, in a certain way, it is similar to what happened in Cuba.... In the end, didn't all the power end up in the hands of the Cuban Communist Party?

[Answer] I know, I know.... One person cannot fool a people. Fidel cannot fool them. What happened in Cuba is that the Cuban clergy wanted to fool the people, opposing the interests of the people, wanting to use Christianity as an instrument. And what happened was that the ones who came out the losers were the Cuban clergy, and Christianity lost.... However, I'm going to tell you...Christianity won in the end, because so far in Cuba they have been creating a Christian government that benefits the poor, the exploited, those on the margin of society, the Catholics, or the 12 men who followed Christ. So far, in Cuba, they have been constructing that kind of government.

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CSO: 3010/1690

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